

Use of Holiday Calendar

This calendar has been prepared to assist you in planning and should be used in scheduling events and activities such as examinations, assemblies, field trips, graduations, and school related programs for parents. Courts, legislative bodies, and executive and administrative groups may also find it helpful in order to avoid scheduling conflicts.

Major Jewish religious holidays and observances are indicated in red. HOLIDAYS BEGIN AT SUNDOWN ON THE PRECEDING EVENING and conclude after sunset on the dates noted with the evenings being as sacred as the days themselves. THE SABBATH BEGINS AT SUNSET ON FRIDAY EVENINGS and concludes after sunset on Saturdays. During these observances, work is traditionally prohibited. As a result, Jewish individuals may be absent from both school and work.

No person, regardless of religion, should be penalized for one's religious observances and beliefs.

5 Year Calendar of Major Jewish Holidays

IMPORTANT NOTE: HOLIDAYS BEGIN AT SUNDOWN ON THE EVENINGS PRECEDING THE DATES SHOWN.

	2003 (5764)***	2004 (5765)	2005 (5766)	2006 (5767)	2007 (5768)
Rosh Hashanah (New Year)	Sept. 27-28* Saturday-Sunday	Sept. 16-17* Thursday-Friday	Oct. 4-5* Tuesday-Wednesday	Sept. 23-24* Saturday-Sunday	Sept. 13-14* Thursday-Friday
Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)	Oct. 6 Monday	Sept. 25 Saturday	Oct. 13 Monday	Oct. 2 Monday	Sept. 22 Saturday
Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles)	Oct. 11-12* Saturday-Sunday	Sept. 30-Oct. 1* Thursday-Friday	Oct. 18-19* Tuesday-Wednesday	Oct. 7-8* Saturday-Sunday	Sept. 27-28* Thursday-Friday
Shemini Atzeret** (Eighth Day of Sukkot)	Oct. 18 Saturday	Oct. 7 Thursday	Oct. 25 Tuesday	Oct. 14 Saturday	Oct. 4 Tuesday
Simchat Torah** (Rejoicing of the Law)	Oct. 19** Sunday	Oct. 8** Friday	Oct. 26** Wednesday	Oct. 15** Sunday	Oct. 5** Wednesday
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Pesach (Passover)	April 6-7* Tuesday-Wednesday	April 24-25* Sunday-Monday	April 13-14* Thursday-Friday	April 3-4* Tuesday-Wednesday	April 20-21* Sunday-Monday
Concluding Days of Pesach	April 12-13* Monday-Tuesday	April 30-May 1* Saturday-Sunday	April 19-20* Wednesday-Thursday	April 9-10* Monday-Tuesday	April 26-27* Saturday-Sunday
Shavuot (Feast of Weeks)	May 26-27* Wednesday-Thursday	June 13-14* Monday-Tuesday	June 2-3* Friday-Saturday	May 23-24* Wednesday-Thursday	June 9-10* Monday-Tuesday

* Some Reform Congregations do not observe this day. ** Reform Judaism observes Simchat Torah on the Eighth day of Sukkot. *** Year in Jewish Calendar.

Rosh Hashanah (New Year)

Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)

These holidays are considered the High Holy Days in Judaism. The majority of Jewish students and teachers observe these holidays and will be absent from school.

Sukkot (Festival of Harvest)

Simchat Torah (Rejoicing in the Law)

The holiday of Sukkot lasts eight days and is immediately followed by Simchat Torah on the ninth day (outside of Israel). Jewish students and teachers may be absent from school on the first and second day of Sukkot and on Simchat Torah.

Purim (Feast of Esther)

Hanukkah (Festival of Lights)

These are minor Jewish holidays that do not require absence from daytime work or school. Evening school activities should be avoided on the evening preceding Purim and the eve of Hanukkah, as special synagogue services and holiday family gatherings are held.

Passover (Festival of Freedom)

This holiday lasts eight days, of which the first two days and the last two days are the most important. Jewish students and teachers may be absent from school. Special dietary laws are observed at home and in school during all eight days.

Shavuot (Feast of Weeks)

This is a major holiday and Jewish students and teachers may be absent. In particular, confirmation exercises may require daytime synagogue attendance for 9th and 10th graders and their families.



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SEPTEMBER 2003

- 1 Monday - **Labor Day**. Observed in honor of American labor.
- 27&28* Saturday-Sunday - **Rosh Hashanah** (Jewish New Year). Begins Jewish New Year 5764 and inaugurates ten days of penitence closing with Day of Atonement.

OCTOBER 2003

- 4-12 Saturday-Sunday - **Navratri** - Ten day celebration for Hindus signifying the defeat of Demon King Ravana by Lord Rama.
- 6* Monday - **Yom Kippur** (Day of Atonement). Most holy of Jewish Holy Days, devoted to prayer, fasting and repentance. Many Jewish students absent.
- 13 Monday - **Columbus Day**. Marks Columbus' discovery of America in 1492. Most schools closed.
- 17 Tuesday - **Citizenship Day**. Commemorates signing of the United States Constitution in 1787.
- 11-12* Saturday-Sunday - **Sukkot** (Feast of Tabernacles). First 2 days festival of harvest, thanksgiving and remembrance of the Jews wandering in the wilderness, and living in booths, or tabernacles, after their exodus from Egypt. This biblical holiday was the basis of the Pilgrims' Thanksgiving.
- 18* Saturday - **Shemini Atzeret** (Eighth Day of Sukkot). Marks climax of Jewish holy season. (Reform Judaism observes Simchat Torah on the eighth day of Sukkot).
- 19* Sunday - **Simchat Torah** (Rejoicing of the Law). Reading the Law (Torah) is completed and begun anew in the synagogue. Day marked with festivity and a spirit of reverence.
- 25 Saturday - **Diwali**. Festival of lights observed by Hindus to celebrate the triumph of good over evil, by Jains to mark the passing of Lord Mahavir and by Sikhs to celebrate the release of Guru Hargobind from imprisonment.
- 26 Saturday - **Ramadan**. The ninth month in the Islamic calendar. Thirty days of fasting from sunup to sundown in honor of the first revelations to the Prophet Muhammad, ends in Eid-al-Fitr.
- 27 Monday - **Reformation Day**. Observed in many Protestant churches to mark beginning of Protestant Reformation in 1517

NOVEMBER 2003

- 1 Saturday - **All Saints Day**. Christian Holy Day of obligation commemorating all lesser saints as well as holy men and martyrs whose records have not survived.
- 7-9 Thursday-Saturday - **New Jersey Education Association Days**. Schools closed.
- 11 Tuesday - **Veteran's Day**. Honors those who fought in the United States Armed Services. Legal holiday.
- 26 Wednesday - **Eid-al-Fitr** - Islamic festival of the breaking of the fast, Ramadan.
- 27 Thursday - **Thanksgiving Day**. Marks Pilgrims' celebration during first winter in the New World. Legal Holiday (schools also closed on Friday, November 23).

DECEMBER 2003

- 8 Monday - **Bodhi Day**. Buddhist celebration of the Enlightenment of Buddha, ca. 596 B.C.E.
- 8 Monday - **Feast of the Immaculate Conception**. Catholic Holy Day of obligation, celebrating Mary's pilgrimage of freedom from sin from moment of her conception.

- 10 Wednesday - **Human Rights Day**. Marks UN adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948.
- 15 Monday - **Bill of Rights Day**. Marks ratification of first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution in 1791.
- 19-26 Friday-Friday - **Hanukkah** (Festival of Lights). Eight-day festival marking first recorded battle for religious liberty and rededication of the Temple by the Maccabees. In Jewish homes candles are lit for eight nights to commemorate the religious and historical significance of the holiday. School events should be avoided on the evening preceding the first day. Many families observe this holiday at home or in the synagogue during all eight days.
- 25¹ Thursday - **Christmas Day**. One of the most important and widely celebrated events of the Christian year, marking the birth of Jesus. Legal holiday, all schools closed.
- 26-1/1 Friday-Thursday - **Kwanzaa**. African-American holiday, founded in 1966, that celebrates family life and African-American traditions. It is a cultural rather than a religious or political holiday, based on the harvest festivals of Africa.

JANUARY 2004

- 1¹ Thursday - **New Year's Day**. Protestant, Catholic and Greek Orthodox holy day marking Feast of Circumcision. Also known as Octave Day of Christmas. Legal holiday, all schools closed.
- 1 Thursday - **Emancipation Proclamation**. Issued by President Lincoln in 1863 to free slaves in states which were in rebellion.
- 6¹ Tuesday - **Feast of the Epiphany**. Commemorates the baptism of Jesus, the visit of the three wise men to Jerusalem and the miracle of Cana.
- 19 Monday - **Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday**. (January 15, 1929). Commemorates birth of the civil rights leader. Observed third Monday of January. Legal holiday, most schools closed.
- 22 Thursday - **Chinese, Korean and Vietnamese New Year**.

FEBRUARY 2004 - Black History Month

- Sponsored by the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History to promote pride in the heritage of Black Americans.
- 2 Monday - **Eid-al-Adha** - Islamic festival of sacrifice.
- 12 Thursday - **Lincoln's Birthday** (1809).
- 16-20 Monday-Friday - **Brotherhood/Sisterhood Week**.
- 16 Monday - **President's Day** (observed).
- 22 Sunday - **Washington's Birthday** (1732).
- 23 Monday - **Eastern Orthodox Lent begins**.
- 25 Wednesday - **Ash Wednesday**. Opens penitential Lenten season - forty days, not counting Sundays, preceding Easter; observed by Catholics and many Protestant denominations. Catholic ceremonies include marking forehead with ashes from palms burned after Palm Sunday of previous year. In the Bizantine rite, Lent begins on the Monday before Ash Wednesday.

MARCH 2004

- 6 Saturday - **Purim** (Feast of Esther). Jewish day of merrymaking, marking defeat of Persian tyrant Haman, who sought to secure his power by making scapegoats of the Jews. Book of Esther is read in synagogue on the preceding evening, and gifts of food are exchanged and distributed to the poor. This is an important holiday for families to celebrate together in the synagogue. It would

be helpful not to plan evening activities on this day.

- 17 Wednesday - **St. Patrick's Day**. Traditional festivities honor the Patron Saint of Ireland.

APRIL 2004

- 4 Sunday - **Palm Sunday**. Opens Holy Week. Each day from Palm Sunday to Easter has special significance for Christians, as relating to the last week of Jesus' life.
- 4 Sunday - **Eastern Orthodox Palm Sunday**. First day of Eastern Orthodox Holy Week.
- 6-7* Tuesday-Wednesday - **First Two Days of Pesach** (Passover). Eight-day celebration marking deliverance of Jews from slavery in Egypt. "Seder" services in Jewish homes on the eve and first night of Passover recount the story of the Exodus. Special Dietary Laws are observed at home and in schools during all eight days. Some Jewish children absent.
- 12-13* Monday-Tuesday - **Concluding Days of Pesach** (Passover). Some Jewish children absent.
- 8 Thursday - **Holy Thursday**. Christian holy day marking last supper.
- 8 Thursday - **Eastern Orthodox Holy Thursday**. Some Eastern Orthodox children absent.
- 9 Friday - **Good Friday**. Commemorates last day of Jesus' life. The three hours of crucifixion from noon to 3 p.m. are observed with special services of silence and devotion by most churches. All schools are closed.
- 9 Friday - **Eastern Orthodox Holy Friday**.
- 11 Sunday - **Easter**. Commemorates the resurrection of Jesus.
- 11 Sunday - **Pascha** (Eastern Orthodox Easter).
- 17 Saturday - **Yom Hashoah** (Holocaust Day). Memorializes the heroic martyrdom of the six million Jews who perished in the Nazi Holocaust 1939-1945.
- 25 Sunday - **Yom Ha'atzmaut** (Israel Independence Day). Commemorates the independence of the State of Israel (May 14, 1948).

MAY 2004

- 5 Wednesday - **Cinco de Mayo**. Celebrated in Mexico and by Mexican-Americans, marks the victory in 1862 of a small Mexican force that routed a French army three times its size.
- 20 Thursday - **Ascension of Our Lord Day**
- 20 Thursday - **Eastern Orthodox Ascension of Our Lord Day**. Some Eastern Orthodox children absent.
- 26-27* Wednesday-Thursday - **Shavuot** (Feast of Weeks). Marks giving of the Law (Torah) on Mount Sinai. Also called Pentecost, because it is the fiftieth day after Passover. Post Bar/Bat Mitzvah Confirmation ceremony in the synagogue. Teen-age rite of passage. Some Jewish children absent.
- 30 Sunday - **Pentecost** (Whit Sunday). Christian Holy Day commemorating descent of Holy Spirit upon the Apostles, fifty days after resurrection, and first Christian baptism.
- 30 Sunday - **Pentecost** (Eastern Orthodox).
- 31 Monday - **Memorial Day** (Decoration Day). Honors those who died in all wars. Legal holiday. All schools closed.

JUNE 2004

- 6 Sunday - **All Saints Day** (Eastern Orthodox).

* Jewish Holidays which are major observances. All Jewish Holidays begin at sundown of the preceding evening. ¹ Some Eastern Orthodox Churches adhere to the Julian calendar and observe this holiday 13 days later.